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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2013

Fundraiser Annual event helps church Page 3

Along the Lakeshore Listings for community events

Rob Ford A humorous look at Toronto's mayor Page 4

Police tribunal Officer demoted Page 23



INPORTANEWS

SERVING PORT COLBORNE . WAINFLEET . SHERKSTON . LOWBANKS . ISSUE NO. 44 VOLUME 17

For news updated daily see www.inportnews.ca HEALTH CARE: NHS supervisor says clinical data more important than politics

Political theatre' around hospital plan

RAY SPITERI QMI Agency Niagara

It doesn't make financial or medical sense to build a new south Niagara hospital and keep existing sites open in Niagara Falls, Niagara-onthe-Lake, Fort Erie, Welland and Port Colborne, says Niagara Health System supervisor Kevin Smith.

Smith was reacting to comments made by both NDP Leader Andrea Horwath and Welland NDP MPP Cindy Forster earlier this wook

See Hospital Page 2



Niagara Health System supervisor Kevin Smith says he's more focused on providing good, clinical advice than on the politics that usually surrounds health-care



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LOCALNEWS

■ HOSPITAL

Critics say chosen site not part of south Niagara

From Page 1

On Tuesday, Horwath said she supports the idea of a new hospital in Niagara Falls, but doesn't believe in the idea of cannibalizing or gobbling up all of the other health-care services in surrounding communities to put it in place.

"Building a new hospital in Niagara Falls shouldn't mean pitting one municipality against another, and for New Democrats it won't mean closing other hospitals in the Forster said she supports the idea of a new hospital in the Falls, but only if there's still a hospital to serve south Nia-

gara residents.

"That isn't supporting it, I'm afraid," said Smith, a politically-appointed supervisor, noting his recommendation last year was to replace those five sites with a full-service hospital at the corner of Lyons Creek and Montrose Rds. "I respect every issue has politications and the corner of Lyons Creek and Montrose Rds."

ical theatre and the political

decision-making process ultimately prevails. But my job is to offer solutions that make good, clinical sense, that are

affordable and sustainable.
"No city or region in the province would have that many hospitals for that population density. The critical mass doesn't make triable. You would be duplicating your expenses over and over and over."

Smith said his plan, which is being reviewed by Health Minister Deb Matthews, calls for a full-service south Niagara hospital to complement the new one in St. Catharines. There would be "appropriate, community-based services and after-hours care" in municipalities that will see their hospitals close, along with family-

health teams and urgent-care centres. Smith said it would cost more money to continue operating those five sites than it would be to build a new, stateof-the-art hospital for south Niagara. Critics, particularly in Welland, believe the location chosen on donated land on the outskirts of Niagare Falls is not truly in the southern tier. Smith said he recommended that general area of the city after consulting geographic and demographic expert planners, medical officials and

Niagara politicians.

He said areas around the world are choosing to consolidate major health-care services around critical mass and where new and graduating

want to work.

"It's important to remember there isn't a full-service hospital in Fort Erie and Port Colborne now (they have urgent-

care centres)," he said.
"We've already consolidated obstetrics and it's working well. We have to make sure that fact and education outstrips emotional and a historical desire to keep things the way they were."

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PUBLIC SAFETY: Tree that fell on car, killing Port Colborne woman, was on private property

Arborists watching for problem trees

DAVE JOHNSON InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — A tree that fell on Andrea Stewart's car nearly three weeks ago, killing het, was on private property, Mayor Vance Badawey says.

Mayor vance Badawey says.

Badawey said city crews
checked the area after the incident and determined it was not
on city property.

"However, I asked staff to have a surveyor to conduct a survey of the property to be sure that was the case," the mayor said. Stewart, 56, was killed when

the large tree fell on the car she was driving on Fielden Ave. between Kent and Alexandra Sts. The incident took place during a wind storm that swept through Niagara. Port Colborne saw peak wind speeds of 106 km/h that day.

"Whether it was public or private, we have been, and continue to be, very proactive when it comes to trees in the city," the mayor said.

In the past 25 years, numerous trees have been taken down across the city, Badawey said. "Look at Elm St. or King St.,

they used to be lined with trees."
While the city does not have a forestry division, it works with an arborist to look at which trees should be trimmed to keep them off hydro lines or which trees need to be taken down due to being diseased.

Under Port Colborne's prop-

erty standards bylaw, the city can go onto private property to remove a diseased or dead tree, if it proves to be a risk to a neighbouring home or city property, Badawey said.

With the incident two weeks ago, he said residents are more aware of their surroundings.

In Welland, forestry department foreman Aurelio Magazeni said residents can call the city about trees they're con-

Once the information is taken down, it will come across his desk.

cerned with

"I've been here 28 years now, I know the trees and know the areas where there could be problems," Magazzeni said. "If a tree is a hazard, it's removed right away."

Welland has four arborists on staff who do urban forest work daily. Magazzeni said if they see something dangerous, they'll remove it right away.

The city sits on a clay base, and with the recent rain the grounds is soft, he said, which could be an issue. Strong winds could knock over a tree from the

And it's not just dead trees that fall in storms. Magazzeni has seen dead tress still standing while healthy trees were blown over.

> dave.johnson@sunmedia.ca Twitter:@DaveJTheTribune



SARAH FERGUSON STAFF PHOTO

Andrea Stewart, 56-year-old, died three weeks ago when a large tree fell onto her car on Fielden Ave. in Port Colborne. Mayor Vance Badawey said the tree was on private property, but the city was checking to make sure.

CHRISTMAS: Seven homes will be decked out for the holidays.

House tour held as a fundraiser

DAVE JOHNSON InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE - Even though Christmas is still more than a month away, people taking part in an annual house tour will have a sneak peek into homes already decorated

for the holiday season. Rev. Robert Hurkmans of St. James and St. Brendan Anglican Church said the sixth annual Port Colborne Winter Celebration Holiday House Tour takes place on Saturday,

Nov. 23, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at seven locations in the city. "We usually have six homes in the tour," he said, adding the locations won't be released until the day of the tour.

Hurkmans said the house tour supports youth and outreach programs, Maker's Market. Out of the Cold, cinema the Guild Hall. "It's a busy place."

As for how homes are selected for the tour, Hurkmans said there is a committee at the Charlotte St. church that approaches homeown-

"We usually get three answers: no, not this year, and Hurkmans said commit-

tee members remember those who said 'not this year' and will go back to them. "We come back," he said with a laugh.

All of the homes will be decorated for Christmas and Hurkmans said it inspires people to think about how they can decorate their own homes and gets them in the festive

Volunteers will be inside

night and other programs at home each as visitors arrive, he said, adding the day could not go off without help from

community sponsors. Tickets can be purchased in advance at the church and Something Else. The Guild Hall is the starting location and where tickets can be pur-

chased the day of the tour. DAVE JOHNSON/QNI AGENCY NIAGARA From left, Rev. Robert Hurkmans, Pat Davis, Mary Lawson, Nancy Rivers and Jim Lawson hold posters for St. James and St. Brendan Anglican Church's sixth annual Port Colborne Winter

Celebration Holiday House Tour. The tour takes place on Saturday, Nov. 23, 2013 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at seven locations in Port Colborne, Ont.



POLITICS

Regional cultural grant proposal sent back

DON FRASER OMI Agency Niagara

A proposed Niagara Region arte fund has been cent hack to a regional culture committee to be fleshed out.

The staff report, received at the region's integrated community planning committee, recommended \$500,000 be included in 2014 budget deliberations for a Niagara Cultural Investment Program.

The committee asked for more program details, after moving to halve that suggested amount to \$250,000. Any decision is deferred until the culture committee's "for-

mulation on what the program would look like," said integrated community planning commissioner Patrick Robson in an interview "They want the committee to

give advice on details and success measures in the program."

The report's recommendation flows from Niagara Culture Plan consultations, where it became clear funds were needed to further support regional cultural programming and organiza-

It was prompted by Niagara Region council's request that staff develop a cultural investment program to be considered

in the budget The resulting report gives an

flone

economic case for more cultural investment, citing the 13,000 full-time equivalent jobs that generate \$396 million in labour income alone It says while Niagara's other

municipalities also invest in culture, much of the financial support for programming by nonprofit cultural groups is done for specific, one-time purposes. The proposed program offers project-based funding for nonprofit cultural organizations and

local municipalities to offer cultural activities and events, and also considers festivals. It would provide ongoing annual funding, to create sta-

bility, and complement but not duplicate other programs. It's suggested the plan include ossibilities for regional-wide investment, partnerships and shared-costs, and funding based on clear measures and perform-

ance indicators. "It now remains an undecided matter," said Robson. "And as far as any program amount, it's undecided - but when the resolution comes back to (committee), the number \$250,000 will still be in it, for their consid-

It's also not clear if discussion on the program will be revisited before this year's budget process is complete.

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innort news@sunmedia.ca John Tobon, publisher, print & digital Dave Johnson, Inport News senior reporter



Ourview

Leaders need to be clearer on hospital

here could be a hospital on every street comer in Niagara if Andrea Horwath or Tim Hudak were to become

Both Horwath, the leader of Ontario's New Democratic Party. and Progressive Conservative Leader Tim Hudak pledged their pre-election support for a south Niagara hospital but have offered little explanation about how they would pay for a facility the Liberal government says it can't afford.

Both have been buzzing around Niagara, staging photo ops in front of Greater Niagara General Hospital, running ads and speed-dialing reporters. Their sudden interest bas to do with the coming byelection to replace former Liberal MPP Kim Craitor who resigned as the area's provincial representative in

September. Clearly, the question about whether a new hospital should be built on Montrose Rd. to serve Niagara's southern communities like Port Colborne, Wainfleet, Niagara Falls, Welland and Fort

Erie is going to be an issue that separates the political parties. The Liberal government has been stone cold to the idea of building another Niagara hospital so soon after spending \$1

billion on the new St. Catharines General Hospital Let's hope Hudak and Horwath aren't just saying what they think people want to hear. But both have been short on specifics - like how much it will cost and where they'll get the cash to

Horwath has also suggested she would keep the community hospitals like Fort Erie's Douglas Memorial and Welland County

sites open, even after building a new hospital in Niagara Falls. That's not how it worked in St. Catharines. The new hospital replaced the aging St. Catharines General with a modern

facility. The old one was closed when the new one opened. Horwath, however, pledged to build a new hospital in Niagara Falls but keep the existing hospitals open - serving their communities in some unspecified canacity.

It sounds like Horwath is trying to have her cake and eat it too. She wants to win votes in Niagara Falls, promising a new south Niagara hospital. But she wants to hold onto the Welland riding now held by New Democrat Cindy Forster.

In the lead-up to the Niagara Falls by election, there's lots of posturing on Niagara's hospital file. Nothing wrong with that, but Niagarans need Hudak, Horwath and Liberal Premier Kathleen Wynne to be clear about the costs of building a new hospital, where that money will come from, and their plans for the old hospitals.

- Corey Larocaue

INPORTANEWS I've been thinking about God's grace

REV. DR. STEVEN DAVIS Central United Church

As of November 21 I turn 50 years old, That's an intriguing birthday. Half a century. It's not particularly old, but then again ... Well, maybe it explains why I prefer to think of myself as two 25s rather than as 50. But it is one of those milestone birthdays that pretty much force us to take stock of our lives. Have things worked out the way we wanted them to? Do we have regrets? Are there things we would have done differently if we had been given the chance?

In one sense I suppose that the answer to those questions is always "yes." Who among us can look back at the whole scope of our lives and actually say that everything has been perfect. That we've never slipped up, hurt anyone, made a bad choice. We've all done that. Christians do those things as much as anyone. A long time ago Paul wrote that "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do." Some people look at some of the situations we Christians get ourselves into and they immediately cry "hypocrite." Well, only if we hold others to a different standard than we hold ourselves to, I personally understand fully what Paul was talking about. Is there anyone among us who hasn't from time to time ignored the little voice of conscience in our heads and gone ahead and - in Paul's words - done the thing we do not want to do? Probably not. If anyone reading this can say that, then - well - you're a better person that I am.

Thinking about this reminds me, of course, of the wonders of God's grace. "Grace" of course is a free gift. It is that which is given without condition, simply out of the generosity of the giver. In the case of grace, the give is God. I've noticed over the years that there are so many people who want to put limits on the grace of God. To many it becomes conditional on this or that: good works, belief, or any number of things. But to put a condition on grace is to deny grace. Grace has no conditions; it's just grace. God extends his grace to us, as it is in God's power to do. It's not even in our power to accept or reject it. Grace is simply ours because God has given it to us. I've sometimes likened God's gift of grace to a person who anonymously slips a hundred dollars into my mailbox in the middle of the night. Once I find it, it's mine to do with as I please, I have many options. I can use it selfishly. for my own purposes; I can use it generously to help others; I can simply hide it away somewhere and never touch it; I can

turn it over to the police. But what I can't do is give it back to the person who's given it to me. It's the same with the grace God bestows on each of us. We can't reject it or give it back, because it's been given to us. All we can do is use it - wisely or not. And sometimes, we'll all choose the "not." Just as Paul said, "what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do." As to the consequences for using God's grace unwisely? They, of course, are for God to decide.

Our responsibility and our privilege is simply to proclaim the existence of grace, given to the world in the form of Jesus Christ. We do that not only (and perhaps not even primarily) in words, but also in how we relate to others. We do not judge or condemn anyone. We simply proclaim God's grace and we live the love of Jesus.

My 50 years haven't been perfect, But they also haven't been a waste of time. I've had the chance to learn a lot about the grace of God in that half century, and I still have a lot to learn about it, I'm hoping that all of us take some time to reflect and be thankful for the grace of God given to us all - because, truly, none of us are perfect, and all of us sometimes do those things we know we should not do, and we fail to do the things we know we should do. But God grants us a new start. Always.

■readers'views

Explaining Mayor Rob Ford to the children

ommy! Mommy! Mr. Ford is on TV again and now he says he may have accidentally murdered somebody and buried the body under his desk at city hall and he's really, really sorry.

"Oh, no honey. That's just a comedian with 14 pillows under his shirt." "So the mayor is not a murderer?"

"No honey. But it's early in the week."

"So the mayor is still just a drunken crack head who lies and cheats and calls people nasty names? "That's right, honey. And because we live in Etobicoke, we respect him for that?

"Ford Nation, right?" "Ford Nation forever, darling, Remember to tell your friends at school - it's all a big conspiracy, the cops are out to get him and the chief of police should be investigating Justin Trudeau or Margaret Atwood or Santa Claus. Yeah, Santa. Were you happy with your gifts last year?"

"No. cause everything had Ford Nation printed on it." "So?"

WILLIAM THOMAS

"My tattoo is still itchy." "Don't be cheeky." "So how did Mr. Ford get to be

mayor, Mommy?" Well, we voted for him to go to city hall and clean up all the corruption and kickbacks and stuff."

"Did it work?" "Well, actually there wasn't any of

that going on so then he stood up for us in the 'war against the car' and ...
"Did it work?"

"Well, actually there was no war and now's he's Mr. Subway, but .. 'Didn't he do anything as mayor?

"Yes of course he did. He ripped up a bicycle lane so that a bunch of downtown, left-wing pinkos would

"How'd that go?" "Well, it cost almost \$300,000 to

have to walk to work."

"And what?"

"And only \$59,000 to build it." "That's it. That's all he's done!" "No of course not. He started "Cut the Waist" weight-loss program so all of us could eat healthier and lose .

"And then he quit and got even fatter cause he always eats KFC "And he phones us back personally and he stands up for us and he's depleting the supply of drugs on the street and most important ... he refuses to raise taxes."

"Oh! "That's what it's all about. Never, ever raising taxes in the city of Toronto

ever, ever, ever again." "But my teacher says if we paid a little more taxes we could open the school pool and plaster wouldn't be

falling on our heads all the time." "Your teacher probably listens to CBC Radio and reads the Toronto Star. What has Mommy told you about

kooks?"

listening to those left-wing pinkos and

See Mayor Page 5

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: Copyright in letters and other material submitted to the publisher and accepted for publication remains with the author, but the publisher and its licensees may freely reproduce them in print, electronic or other form.

■ CRIME: 24-year-old Niagara Falls woman wanted for arrest in case of purse thefts

So how did Mr. Rob Ford get to be mayor

But you said Mr. Ford never used drugs and now he says he did! Isn't that bad?' "Well, no. It's not bad because he doesn't remember doing

drugs "Why not?"

"Because he was completely falling down drunk at the time." "But isn't that bad, too?" "Well it's not as bad as hardcore

drug use. Understand? "I think so. Like the time Uncle Jerry got caught naked in the back of K-Mart with a mannequin but he said it was OK because he had

amnesia?" "Exactly. These are health issues that require our sympathy." "But Mommy, what if Mr. Ford

has to go to prison?" "Well, it won't be the worst thing in the world. He does have a

lot of friends there." *But who would Ford Nation 'Oh honey. I didn't want

to spoil the surprise of your Christmas gift but ... what do you think about this sweatshirt? It's pink, your favourite colour."

"Cherry Nation?!?" "That's right, Don Cherry is a nice man, he'd be a good mayor

and he won't raise taxes." But Mommy, that guy's crazy. All he does is stick up for violence and he says nasty things about people and the way he dresses hurts my eyes.

"But he won't raise taxes." "Oh." "And another thing." "IATh at?"

"We need to have that tattoo scraped off your arm and . 'No. I'm not getting a 'I Love Don Cherry Tattoo.' No way,

www.williamthomas.ca

Police hunt for coat scam suspect

MARYANNE FIRTH InPort News Staff

WELLAND - Police have issued a warrant for the arrest of the woman allegedly involved in a coat scam that

has bilked shoppers out of money across Niagara. Niagara Regional Police said the 24-year-old Niagara Falls resident has

run the scam this month at several large department stores in Welland, Niagara Falls and St. Catharines. Micheline, a 67-year-old Welland woman who asked that her last name not be used, was shopping at the

Welland Walmart recently when she was approached by a young woman who had three coats in hand. The stranger said she was looking to buy her mother a jacket, that Micheline was about her size and asked her to try

the coats on As Micheline hesitantly agreed. the unworn coats were draped by the stranger over her shopping cart, as well as her purse, which was sitting in the front of the buggy. The coats were too big, so the stranger

said she'd be right back with a smaller size and plucked the garments from the

Discovering her purse was missing. Micheline left to get security and when she returned to her cart her purse and the young woman were back Cash from Micheline's wallet, how-

ever, had since disappeared. Micheline confronted the woman. who denied the allegations and left the

Surveillance footage later showed the theft had occurred. Niagara Regional Police spokesperson Const. Derek Watson said the woman ran the scam several times between Nov. 3 and Nov. 10 at different Niagara department stores.

During that time, she also attempted to purchase gift cards with a stolen credit card, he said.

Alexandra Holditch, 24, is sought by Niagara Regional Police. Her last known address is in the Lundy's Lane area of Niagara Falls, but

her whereabouts are unknown, said She is described as 5-foot-6, 120 lbs

with long brown hair. Holditch is charged with three counts of theft under \$5,000, one count of fraud under \$5,000, and two counts of possession of property obtained by crime. Anyone with information Holditch's whereabouts is asked to call Det. Const.

Carm Cataldo or Det Const Karl Fiddes maryanne.firth@sunmedia.ca Twitter: @mfirthTribune

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ALONG THE LAKESHORE

NOVEMBER 21 434 WING AIRFORCE

Association holds its general meeting at Royal Canadian Legion Branch 613, Hwy. 20, Fonthill, at 2 p.m. Guest speaker is Belinda Wilson of Fenion Falls, RCL Branch 238. A PowerPoint presentation will be given on the Pilgrim's Watch of World War sites that took place this summer. All welcome; refreshments served.

SAN JOSE SHARKS

TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2013 @7:00PM AT THE ACC

MAKERS' MARKET

Christmas shopping event, 2 p.m. to 8 p.m., at Guild Hall, 77 Charlotte St., Port Colborne. Quality items all handmade by local artisans. Many vendors.

NOVEMBER 23 JUKEBOX SATURDAY NIGHT

Part 2 '50s and '60s dance presented by Kiwanis Club of Welland, with DJ Bill Nagy. Starts 7:30 p.m. at Casa Dante, 34 Lincoln St. W. Cost \$15

Dante, 34 Lincoln St. W. Cost \$15 a person (includes pizza, snacks and prizes) Casual dress. For ticket information call Pauline at 905-735-1188. TTALIAN CHRISTMAS DINNER

HALIAN CHRISTMAS DINNER

at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 29 Bald St. Adults \$12 or reserve a group of four adults for \$40; youth (12 and under) \$6. For tickets or reservations call 905-732-7543. Please bring a donation for Open Arms Mission.

WESLEY'S FOOD FAIR

at Wesley United Church, 244 First Ave., Welland, 8:30 a.m. to noon. It features a cookle walk, delf and bake table, Christmas crafts, jams and jellies, silent auction and crafts, and breakfast café.

PATSY CLINE CHRISTMAS with Amberley Beatty and the Sweet

Dreams, at Welland Community
Wellness Complex, 145 Lincoln St., 7
p.m. Tickets available at the wellness
centre, Country Kettle Store and
Grill Restaurant in Port Colborne,
Semenuk's Esso, C&C Arts at Fairview
Mall or by calling 905-325-7004,
WINTER CELEBRATION

House Tour, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Guild Hall, 72 Charlotte St., Port Colborne, The day's events include seven locations to visit, craft market, silent auction, lunch and much more. For tickets call 905,834,3184

BRUNCH AND BAZAAR at the Port Colborne Baptist Church.

84 Ridgewood Ave., 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Baked goods and Christmas shop. Brunch tickets are \$6 at the door. PROGRESSIVE EUCHRE

PROGRESSIVE EUGHKE

at Fonthill Lions hall, Hwy. 20, 7 p.m. Prizes, light food, cash bar, \$5.

NOVEMBER 24 DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER

Night: A social justice activist of international renown is guest for this year's Distinguished Speaker Night at St. Kevin's church, Welland. Fr. Bill Ryan is a Jesuit priest and has a PhD in economics from Harvard University. He is special adviser to the Jesuit Forum for Social Faith and Justice based in Toronto. The theme of his address is: Living with Limits, Living Well: Hints for Neighbours on an Endangered Planet. In its 16th year, Distinguished Speaker Night is a fall tradition at St. Kevin's, It begins with 5 p.m. mass, followed by a potluck supper at 6:15 p.m. in the parish hall followed by the speaker's address at 7:15 p.m. People attending the potluck are asked to bring a dish of their choosing (salad, main course, dessert etc.) and their own place settings. Coffee, tea, and juice are provided. For more info, call 905-735-3562.

Continued on Page 7



WANT YOUR NON-PROFIT EVENT INCLUDED?

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CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

and luncheon presented by St Therese Parish Hall, Bell and Fares Sts., Port Colborne, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Lunch served noon to 1 p.m.: pasta and meatballs or sausage and cabbage rolls. Dinners \$8. For preorders, call Nancy at 905-835-8097, Jessie at 905-834-9772 or Paula at 905-894-9717

NOVEMBER 25 PELHAM HORTICULTURAL

Society annual general meeting and potluck dinner at the Fonthill library We will be celebrating our 85th anniversary. Installation of officers after supper. No December meeting.

NOVEMBER 26

PASTA TAKEOUT AT ST. KEVIN Pasta dinner (four meatballs, pasta, bun

and salad) \$10; dozen meatballs \$10; 32 CHRISTMAS MALL SHOPPE

and bake sale, noon to 3 p.m. Niagara Women's Connection, a nondenominational Christian women's club

invites you. This month we're featuring a Christmas craft and bake sale, including a silent auction. Tina Weidelich will present an inspirational message called The Perfect Present."Coffee, tea and treats will be served in addition to lunch for \$10. Babysitting is provided free of charge. This month's event is at Kirk on the Hill, 1344 Haist St., Pelham, For reservations call Mangaret Quenelle at 905-788-9641 or e-mail her at mrs.q@ live.ca.

NOVEMBER 27

presented at 7 p.m. at Dunnville Public

Library, 317 Chestnut St. Pictures and artifacts. presented by TH&B historian and author John Spring, Sponsored by the Dunnville District Heritage Association, Admission is free but space is limited. Come early,

NOVEMBER 28

FRENCH WOMEN'S entrepreneurship eight-week class starts. Learn to start your own business. Classes at Welland Heritage Council and Multicultural Centre, Monday to Friday. 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Child care available Contact Lori for more information, at lwebster@wellandheritagecouncil.com

or 905-732-5337 ext. 128 **NOVEMBER 29**

Bring a minimum of a full ball to trade at Pelham Public Library, Everyone

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

hosted by Royal Canadian Legion Branch 56 Ladies Auxiliary, Port Colborne., 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Crafters. penny sale, bake table, draws, white elephant table. Lunch available.

NOVEMBER 30 CHRISTMAS TEA

bake sale, penny sale, deli and draws at All Saints Anglican Church, 80 Forks Rd. Welland, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free admission.

Continued on Page 8

welcome. Bring your handiwork and stay a while, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Free.

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NIAGARA REFKEEPERS Association meets at the Niagara Regional Police Service community room, 5 Lincoln St., Welland, starts at 7 p.m.

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INPORT NEWS THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2013 improvement charge) are extra.

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SOUP'S ON!

tickets on sale for the annual fundraiser for St. Kevin Social Justice Scholarship fund. The menu offers nine soups: spicy carrot, ginger and coconut (Blessed Trinity High School); chicken wing and French vegetable pistou soups (Eastdale Secondary); Vietnamese pho (beef and noodle) and red lentil soups (Confederation); carrot with bacon, sage and cream cheese (Notre Dame College School) corn and pepper chowder with barbecued chicken and Scottish leek and potato soups (Niagara College Canadian Food and Wine Institute) and chocolate chili

(Lakeshore Catholic), Tickets are available at St. Kevin's parish office Monday through Friday; before and after weekend Masses; or call ticket convener Mim Gibbons, 905-734-8486. Tickets are \$10 each. seatings are 11 a.m., noon and 1 p.m. and date of the event is Friday. Jan. 31

WELLAND WALL OF ART

Welland artist Daniel Pigeon is featured this month and December at the Welland Wall of Art at Welland Civic Square. More information is available by calling 905-732-2455. CHAIRIFIC FUNDRAISER Pelham artists have painted oak

children's chairs from when Pelham Public Library was built. Each chair is signed by the artist and comes with a gift basket. Bidding at the





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Food trucks prove popular at NOTL council

Special to QMI Agency Niagara

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE - There was nothing but praise for gourmet food trucks at events, markets and wineries during a recent public meeting on the previously controversial issue

Ten people spoke in favour of proposed zoning bylaw amendments for management of the industry, before an overflowing public gallery. The speakers included restaurant and winery owners, food truck operators and local residents

Jamie Slingerland, of Pillitteri Estate Winery, said 25% of events held at the winery involve food trucks, with local caterers and restaurants providing food the rest of the time.

"There are opportunities for all of us to work together," be said, adding food trucks have a strong following. "I have yet to see a simple burger and

Olde Angel Inn owner Barry Williams said he was speaking on behalf of 55 to 60 operators of tourist accommodations and businesses in the heritage

"There is room for food trucks," he said. "I think the bylaw is somewhat of a level balance (between food trucks and restaurants) Doug Widdicombe, president of the

Village Community Association, said the Saturday morning and Wednesday evening markets held in Garrison Village attract a lot of people from the town and across the region.

"Our residents love it," he said. "Food trucks are really welcome in the neigh-Event co-ordinator Lauren O'Malley Norris said food trucks bring "a beautiful young dynamic" to the community.

She noted people who come to events where there are food trucks also spend money on other amenities in the town. One of the owners of the Yellow Pear food truck, Nicole Ridsdale, asked councillors to consider allowing longer

periods for food trucks to park at a winery. Under the proposed legislation, one food truck would be allowed at a winery for a 24-hour period once a week. That would be in addition to current rules that permit wineries to hold

24 special events per year. Ridsdale, who also operates a restaurant at Southbrook Vineyards, said she would like to see wineries have the option of having food trucks on site for two or three days at a time.

"We're really big thinkers and really good cooks," she said. Sid Friedman, one of founders of the Ontario Food Truck Association, also

questioned the 24-hour clause. He said many visitors stay in Niagara-on-the-Lake for the weekend visiting wineries, restaurants and other local businesses.

"I'm really glad to see the community come together," said Coun. Andrea Kaiser, after the public meeting. Councillors voted to receive the rec-

ommendations from staff for the draft zoning bylaw amendments to allow food trucks to operate at events on private property. There is no provision for permitting food trucks on public property without the consent of council or in the Oueen Picton commercial zone.

The amendments to the zoning bylaw will come to council for approval in December or in early 2014.





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St. Catharines to host Pan Am rowing

GRANT LAFLECHE OMI Agency Niagara

It was in the words of St Cathorines

Mayor Brian McMullan, the worst kent secret in Ontario. That the Royal Canadian Henley Rowing Course would host the rowing events for the 2015 Pan Am Games has been a foregone conclusion for

months Still, I am pleased that we can say it's official now," said McMullan at a press conference last Friday that officially announced the Martindale Pond as the site for the Pan Am Games row-

ing competition. Aside from hosting what organizers are calling the largest international sporting event in St. Catharines' history, the rowing course will be getting a more than \$820,000 facelift.

The federal government and the city are partnering to replace the bridge connecting Henley Island to the city, along with improvements to the grandstand and the rowing course

"Being here is a reminder of the ingenuity, pride and tenacity of

those early pioneering athletes and supporters," said Ian Troop, CEO of the Toronto 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Games organizing committee speaking of the city's rowing history. "In 2015, we are going to build on that heritage. The Pam Am Games promise to create some truly exciting and

historical moments: The selection of the Henley as a site for the games was praised by threetime Olympic gold medalist Marnie McBean, who competed in the World Rowing Championships held at the

island in 1999. "Rowing before a Canadian crowd is amazing," said McBean. "In 1999, that was the period when I began to struggle. Turned out I had a back injury and I wasn't going as fast I as

She said having a local crowd to push her and cheer her on got her through a difficult semi-final race.

St. Catharines MP Rick Dykstra said the federal government is contributing \$465,000 to replace the bridge and improve the course. The city is pitch-

ing in \$364,000, McMullan said. Jim Bradley, St. Catharines MPP, said the province is funding the operation of the games and expects it to generate some \$82 million in tourist revenue for the province. Some of that money, he expects, will be spent

in Niagara. However, that expectation has been made before. St. Catharines bas hosted large rowing events in the past, particularly the world rowing champi-

onships in 1970 and again in 1999. The 1999 event was billed as something that would draw substantial tourist dollars to the city and the region, but that economic spin-off never really materialized, with spectators often leaving the region after the rowing events ended.

McMullan and Bradley said the Garden City and Niagara Region have more to offer tourists since 1999.

"In St. Catharines we're going to bave the new wine route going right through downtown, we'll also have new facilities open like the arts cen-tre," be said. "I think we just bave a lot more to show and to offer."

Bradley said more effort will be made to promote Niagara attractions, from Niagara Falls to wineries in Niagara-on-the-Lake in an attempt to draw some of the Pan Am Games tourist dollars to the region



From left Michelle Darvill, rowing coach, Kate Goodfellow and Eric Wolfe, rowing athletes, are introduced to the crowd during an announcement regarding the 2015 Pan Am games Friday. Henley Island will host the rowing events for the games.





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LOCALNEWS

MP GOES TO SCHOOL



Welland MP Malcolm Allen bends down to hear a question from a student at St. Mary Catholic School in Welland Monday, in observance of UNICEF Canada's Bring Your MP to School Day.

Malcolm Allen listening to youths

DAVE JOHNSON InPort News Staff

WELLAND - Youths need to be heard.

"We forget they have really important things to offer and we should hear them," said Welland MP Malcolm Allen Monday just inside the doors of St. Mary Catholic School on Plymouth

Allen, fresh from a Remembrance Day ceremony in Port Colborne, was at the school as

Even though their teachers tell them not to ask, one child will always

ask. You can see their teacher's face cringe." MP Malcolm Allen

part of Bring Your MP to School

UNICEF Canada puts on the event, which is actually to be held on Nov. 20 as part of National Child Day.

Allen said the school asked him to come, and being back in Parliament next week this was the only time he could accommodate the request

He said despite the fact the students are too young to vote. they still deserve to be heard

and listened to. Children, Allen said, come up with and do very remarkable

He pointed to the example of Craig Kielburger who formed Free the Children when he was 12 alongside his brother Marc. The two also went on to form

the Me to We social enterprise. Before heading to the school gvm to talk with students from Grade 4 to 6 at the school, Allen said the one question he gets asked when he speaks with voungsters is how much he

makes. "Even though their teachers



For the record, he's paid more than \$160,000 a year

"I tell the students they can

tell them not to ask, one child look that up online ... it's public will always ask. You can see their record." teacher's face cringe," he said.

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Drugs, gun seized in Port Colborne

InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE - A search warrant led to the arrest of four people and the seizure of crystal meth and a sawed-off shotgun from a

Port Colhorne home Niagara Regional Police recently began investigating the sale of methamphetamines in Port Colborne and on Wednesday a search warrant was executed at a

Killaly St. E. residence. As a result, police seized about \$2,000 in methamphetamines, a small amount of cocaine and marijuana, various prohibited and restricted weapons, including a sawed-off shotgun, and stolen property valued at about \$1,300.

Four people were arrested as a result of the investigation

Trevor Lafontaine, 34, and Heather Price, 22, both of Port Colborne are each charged with possession of a controlled substance for the purpose of trafficking, possession of a controlled substance, possession of proceeds of property obtained by crime under \$5,000, two counts of possession of a prohibited weapon, unauthorized possession of a firearm. careless storage of a firearm, unauthorized possession of a restricted firearm, and possession of property obtained obtained by crime

under \$5,000 Joshua Hill, 31, and Shane Rutledge, 30, both of Welland, are charged with possession of a controlled substance for the purpose of trafficking, possession of a controlled substance, possession of proceeds of property obtained by crime under \$5,000, and possession of property obtained by crime under \$5,000

Rutledge and Lafontaine are also each facing an additional charge of breach of probation.







Pharmacists

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There has, however, been considerable debate over the idea of vaccination. Many people are still not convinced that vaccines are a good idea despite the fact that every healthcare professional would agree that they are. There are very few risks associated with vaccinations and the side effects are penerally mild. They may include:

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- FEVER • MILO BASH
- More serious side effects from a vaccine may result from an allergy, but these are very rare (less than one in one illion doses given). The important message is that there are far greater benefits to immunization than there are risks.

One of the most talked about vaccines in autumn is the flu vaccine. As we approach winter, it is time to prepare rselves for Flu Season. What better way to prepare than to get the flu shot and prevent getting the flu in the first place? It is pervised frommended that everyone over the age of 6 months get the flu shot. It is especially important for women who are preparent or breastleding, people who work directly with the community, people who are at high risk of flu-related complications or hospitations, and people with certain chronic health conditions. If you

re questions or concerns about whether the flu shot is right for you, please speak to your doctor or phan Trained pharmacists are now holding thu clinics in some pharmacies to increase awareness about this importance of getting immunized and provide greater seas of access to the file shot for community members. This year the file shot will be offered free of change at each of the Boggio Termiy of Pharmacies locations. Onme by one of our pharmacies

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Video shows Thorold's efforts to improve accessibility

OMI Agency Niagara more accessible community for all.

Wet &

The city has been actively implementing a host of initiatives outlined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Thorold is making strides in becoming a (AODA) over the past several years, and its

OUTSIDE WATERPROOFING

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efforts were recently given a sup- Thorold's been doing in this area," portive nod by the province. The Ministry of Community and Social Services, through its Ontario Accessibility Twitter han-

dle, recently shared a link to a video that showcases some of the ways Thorold has improved accessibility within the community.

"Accessibility is all about positive changes in our communities and our businesses, and the video was created as part of our efforts to recognize and promote local accessibility accomplishments," said Darren Cooney, manager of Ontario

Accessibility's public education and partnerships unit. "In showing these videos, Ontarians can learn about the different approaches to making their communities accessible and inclusive. "A picture is worth a thousand

words, but I think a video is worth a thousand more on top of that." The video highlights several of Thorold's initiatives, from new building codes and standards with a focus on accessibility, to incorporating accessibility functions like

access ramps into city playgrounds and the new city hall building. "We're very happy to see what

Cooney said. "Municipalities and broader public sector organizations have to do these things sooner than businesses, so in many ways, they're leaders and trailblazers because they set the stage for the making things not only barrier free,

business community and for notfor-profits." More recent efforts in Thorold include accessibility components being built in to transit stops and city buildings like the Nick Basciano Centre and new Thorold sen-

iors' centre. But it's not only about making things physically accessible to the public.

"Basically anything we do, ever one should be able to access it," said Donna Delvecchio, Thorold's deputy clerk, "That means making all of our information and documents accessible as well as our buildings

For example, the city recently revamped its web site, www.thorold.com, making it user-friendlier all around And all public documents availa-

and public sites."

ble on the web or at city hall have to be available in a variety of formats. "If something is in PDF form and you need it in brail, we have an obligation to provide it to you in

brail." Delvecchio said. Donna Harrington, an accessibility consultant who serves on the city's Joint Accessibility Committee, commended the city's focus on

but universally accessible. "They're not looking to create things that are just barrier free or specific to people with disabilities, the focus is on making it a totally inclusive community for everyone," she explained. "I find city staff are very proactive and well versed in universal design and AODA requirements and they get stuff

done. They're really on the ball." To view the video showcasing Thorold's accessibility efforts, search 'accessibility Thorold' on YouTube.

More information on the AODA and the available accessibility resources in Thorold can also be found on the city's web site, www. thorold com

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THE TRIBUNE

NRP: Guilty of discreditable conduct under Police Services Act

Niagara police officer demoted, docked 90 hours

OMI Agency Niagara

A Niagara Regional Police officer who pleaded guilty to discreditable conduct has been demoted from firstclass to second class constable for three months and docked 90 hours of pay.

The charge under the Police Services Act was laid after Const. Jeffrey May, a 10-year veteran of the service, pleaded guilty to the criminal charge of theft under \$5,000 in an Owen Sound court-

mom in January. The public needs to know police officers who commit this type of offence will be held to account," bearing officer Insp. George Bench told a disciplinary tribunal Tuesday morning in St. Catharines, "He has brought discredit to himself and the police service."

Bench said police officers are held to a higher standard than the general

In accepting a joint submission from Leeanne Mcclay, CAO of the Niagara Region Police Association who was representing May, and Supt. Scott McLean, acting as the hearing prosecutor, Bench took into consideration May's guilty pleas as evidence he had accepted responsibility for his actions.

While stating "he can't overlook theft-related conduct," Bench acknowledged May was undergoing a number of personal struggles at the time of the incident in December 2011, including the death of his mother for whom he was the sole caregiver.

Bench said May's post-incident actions were "admirable."

May has been working as a volunteer and is in therapy, a statement to the court said. He also paid restitution and was given an absolute discharge with no criminal conviction for the June, 2011 incident in which he was seen destroying a fence and removing and disposing of surveillance cameras worth more than \$1,000 from his nextdoor neighbour's property on the Bruce Domingula

May was at the family cottage to remove his mother's items when the offence occurred, a statement to the

He has the option of forfeiting the 90 hours' salary or working for that without pay, Bench said. The 90 hours must be completed by Sept. 30, 2014. A Welland native, May became the

NRP's eldest recruit when he switched from a career in sales and marketing to join the service in 2003 at the age of 45. Three other NRP officers facing Police Services Act actions - constables Bill Schoenhals Jr., Tim Packer and Gregory Keldson - had their hearings adjourned until Feb. 11.

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A hand up with sustainability

ROB HOULE OMI Agency Niagara

NSI is a non-profit organization
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carbon footorint with the added bento help them with sustainability ini-

efit of saving money have a friend in the Niagara Sustainability Initiative. NSI is a non-profit organization that works with Niagara businesses tiatives and projects.

"Primarily how with do that is through what we call the Carbon Project," NSI executive director Katrina Kroeze said. Businesses "who join us ... join us in the Carbon Project, and that allows them access to reporting their carbon footprint using a software —

a carbon accounting tool software
— that we set them up on and train
them on, and educate them on what
it means to report on your carbon
footprint"

Environmentally conscious companies are not only looking to pollute less, they are also looking to save money, Kroeze said, and the NSI offers tips on everything from water conservation to waste management to decreasing electricity consump-

In addition to measuring carbon emissions, NSI helps companies achieve their sustainability goals by offering workshops.

The events that we host are either

an educational event or a technical event," Kroeze said. "Education being that we bring in the experts and they do best-practice sharing. They talk about success at their place of work, whether it was implementing a waste-reduction strategy or energy efficiencies."

A technical workshop is more hands on, Kroeze said. And offers members "resources they can take back to their place of work and implement right on site. How to

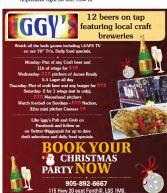
form a green team, how to implement electricity efficiencies, how to do a waste audit, things like that."

The NSI will host its next event -Getting to Zero Waste: Best Practices in Waste Management - on Nov. 26 between 8-10:30 a.m. at the St. Catharines Golf and Country Club. A GM employee will be the keynote speaker at the "educational event" and will talk about the company's zero-waste to landfill program, A member from the Recycling Council of Ontario will also speak. The addresses will then be followed by a panel discussion involving the representatives from GM, the recycling council and a representative from Walker Industries. To register for the event, go to the NSI website at http:// niagarasustainability.org. The event is free to members, and \$40 for non-

Niagara Sustainability Initiative, which is in its third year, currently has 15 member businesses who pay a yearly membership of \$500 to \$5,000, depending on the amount of employees, Kroeze said. Other NSI funding comes from sponorships and from the Ontario Trillium Foun-

mbert houle@sunmedia.ca





Board renews call for specialneeds money

DON FRASER OMI Agnecy Niagara

Niagara's public school board has ramped up its call for more provincial funding for its special needs pro-

grams.
The District School Board of Niagara says it has been chronically underfunded on a per-student basis for nearly a decade. Had it received the average provincial school board amount, that would have meant \$9 million more per year.

Instead, it has dealt with a shortfall of about \$90 million over that period. Repeated calls to address the matter have gone unheeded by the prov-

ince, trustees charged Tuesday night.
The board was told Oct. 25 that letters to Education Minister Liz Sandals
and Premier Kathleen Wynne urged
the two to visit the board, check out
its programs and listen to the DSBN

"We've been after this for 10 years," said trustee Dalton Clark. "There have been countless meetings ... we've pleaded with several different ministers.

"We've never had any luck, but we

just can't just stop trying as it means so much to our special education kids"

Board officials say the "inequitable distribution" of "high needs amount" funds at \$355 per student

put it second-lowest of school boards in Ontario. Given average per-pupil funds to other boards is \$636, it says a more

equitable provincial distribution process is needed. Clark also referred to the Niagara Catholic District School Board, which

he said 'gets for whatever reason, more money than we get." Meanwhile, Niagara Catholic education director John Crocco said his board has been spending more than the ministry has allocated for its spe-

cial needs students.

In a previous interview, Crocco said his board's funding for special needs students varies. It depends on programs to ensure the appropriate inclusion of students in their home schools and "age-appropriate classes".

To this end, Niagara Catholic spends about \$800,000 to \$900,000 peryear more than the ministry provides it through that funding.

At Tuesday's meeting, board chair Kevin Mayes said DSBN's efforts for

improved funding would continue, "until they right this inequity," "It is a travesty, because we could certainly use that money," he said. "We will certainly keep up that fight." Education director, Warren

Hoshizaki said the Niagara board is working with other provincial boards dealing with the same perceived lowfunding plight for special needs students.

"We're not asking to add more

money to the education system," he told the board. "We're asking it be distributed fairly ... for special education."

25

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VACCINATIONS

Officials issue measles warning

QMI Agency Niagara

For the first time in years. the public health department is asking Niagara residents to ensure they have been vaccinated against

measles. The measles virus is on the move, crossing the Atlantic last month into Canada and triggering outbreaks in two provinces. Local public health officials are concerned it could hit

Niagara next. Associate medical officer of health Dr. Jessica Hopkins said the current measles outbreaks have been traced to a community of Dutch Reform Christians in the Netherlands. Some people in that community, who do not get vaccinations for religious reasons, have travelled to Canada and spread the disease. A Dutch Reform commu-

nity in southern Alberta is dealing with an outbreak of measles as a result. There are 28 lab-confirmed cases in Alberta which would normally see one or two a year.

"We have a large Dutch Reform community in Niagara, and the holidays are coming up which is a time when people travel," she said, "So we want Niagarans to know if they want the best protection, they should

get vaccinated. Niagara has already experienced an outbreak of a disease that had otherwise been all but dormant in the

In 2012, the region saw a significant spike in whooping cough. Members of a Low German-speaking Mennonite community in the Guelph area do not vaccinate for religious reasons. Some members of that community visited Niagara,

spreading whooping cough

to non-vaccinated resi-

Measles is a highly virulent airborne disease. Unlike many airborne viruses, the measles organism can survive in the air for a while after someone has coughed

or sneezed. "We are not talking about something like the flu," said Hopkins. "If you have a room with 10 susceptible people in it

and one infected person walks in, nine of those 10 people will contract mea-It is not just the ease with which measles spreads that worries public health officials. Measles is very dan-

gerous and can even be lethal. "One out of every 1,000 people who get measles will have serious swelling in the brain. One or two people out of every 1,000 who get it will die," Hopkins said. "That is

very serious to me." Vaccination programs are aimed at communities, not individuals, and seek to create what experts call "herd

immunity." Since there will always be some people who cannot be given a vaccine - in the case of measles, that's children under 12 months, pregnant women and people with suppressed immune systems cannot get the shot

- the idea is to have as many other people vaccinated as possible. That way, even those who cannot get the vaccine will receive a degree of protec-

However, for herd immunity to work a substantial portion of the community needs to be vaccinated. In the case of measles, Hopkins said a vaccination level of 95% of the community is

"And you have to keep in

mind that even then, you will still have pockets in a community where vaccination rates are low and you can see outbreaks," she

Data on how many people in a community are vaccinated is hard to pin down. There is good information about how many school children are vaccinated, but nothing for adults.

In Niagara, Hopkins said the rate of vaccination in school children is right at the threshold of 95% "We certainly don't want

to see that number slide," she said. A person needs the vaccine twice or to have been previously infected to be considered immune, she said. Those born before 1970 are considered to be

immune, she said, because the measles vaccine was not in use and the infection rate

Those born after 1970 should be vaccinated, she

Vaccination rates have declined in North America and Europe in recent years due to fraudulent claims promoted by celebrities that

vaccines cause autism, Hopkins said a loss of historical memory is also to blame. "We haven't had any serious outbreak of measles since the 1970s, so many people have simply forgot ten how serious it can be,"

she said. Hopkins said residents should talk to their doctors about the measles vaccine or the public health department at 905-688-8248, ext. 7425 for information or to

book a vaccination appointorant.lafleche@sunmedia.ca Twitter: @grandrants

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Frustration over water systems

JEFF BOLICHOWSKI

QMI Agency Niagara A regional council committee passed on a call to amalgamate Niagara's plumbing

Faced with a report showing Niagara Region and its 11 water-providing municipalities could benefit by combining operation of their water and sewer systems, councillors at a strategic planning committee instead voted to work with

local governments to share best practices. But they laid out no guid-

ance or endorsement for a new governance model. That came despite a consultant projecting savings as high as \$11.5 million annually - or

increased costs of \$2.5 million - from amalgamating. The

report ranked a unified system highest among three options.
"This is a little bit more nibbling," said St. Catharines Coun. Brian Heit. "That's all it

is. Seventeen years later and we're still nibbling. "When are we going to get off the pot and do something? This is a long-term decision and we're just going sideways

Councillors largely rallied behind Lincoln Mayor Bill Hodgson's call to share the best ways to run a waterworks

with the lower-tier municipali-"There's nothing unique about what's happening in

Niagara," he said.

But some councillors ripped the move as not going far Heit and St. Catharines

Coun. Andy Petrowski both dismissed it as "wishy-washy." Consultant Leo Gohier said only three regional municipalities - Niagara, York and Waterloo - have two-tier water systems. Hodgson said they're the only such systems

that Ontario has ever had. He said many local councils have "put their political lives on the block" and raised water rates to fix their ailing pipes.

But he said the report uncovered a lot of valuable

"There's a couple of hard truths. If you want to get rid of the (upcoming spending) wall,

we're going to have to come up

with a couple of new sources of revenue," Hodgson said. The walls come as Niagara grapples with one regional and 11 municipal systems in various stages of aging. The report predicted such "walls" in 10 to

30 years Gohier said only 76% of the water in Niagara's pipes generates revenue, meaning the

pipes are leaky. He said the Region ends up getting 130% of that flow back as sewage

"Water consumption is going down — which we know is because of water conservation efforts - but wastewater use is going up," he said. "There is incredible infrastructure degradation. There

are negative trends. The future liabilities are great." Amalgamating could have

come with a \$30-million up-Gohier figured the actual yearly savings from amalgamating could be closer to \$5 million or \$6 million. He said municipalities would have to deal with service level adjustments, specifically noting Pel-

ham's "gold standard" of new meters and an automated reading system would likely But he said the current sys-

tem runs on 12 different strategies, even though what happens in one plumbing system affecting others. He said the existing system

is not sustainable "If you're just doing it for the money, it's not worth the political hassle or even the staff hassle. I don't mind saying that. But if you don't do it,

it's going to take you to a bad place," he said.

plumbing.

Niagara Falls Coun. Selina Volpatti asked for a list of the three municipalities that would benefit most from the amalgamation. Gohier said he was reluctant to appear to be passing judgment on cities'

"I see this as a game of winners and losers here, in a really upside-down way." Volpatti said. "The losers win by sharing and the winners lose by sharing."

St. Catharines Coun. Bruce Timms slammed the move as simply "tinkering with the status quo. A report on municipalities'

willingness to work with the Region will be back in four months.

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